1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



Formerly Naiau brought yams and roast bananas to Lakemba. The Southern Islands formerly brought in no roots, and no first fruits of yams. With the exception of Ono these islands were poor and lived on food obtained in Lakemba. But Oneata and Mothe brought fermented food (*mandrai*) and bananas; Kambara brought coconuts and a shell fish called *kekewa;* Fulanga brought fish and coconuts. Formerly they brought chiefly manufactured articles to Great House and these were called "wares of the land" (*i yau ni vanua*).

## Naiau

Naiau stands in a peculiar position: Tui Naiau holds it. The island is described by the Lakemban nobles as "the land of our little house, of our kitchen." The people are household servants (*kai vale*) of Tui Naiau. They carry firewood for him on their backs, like women, and cook for him with pots like women. They are not very low; if they beg whatever they mention will not be denied. However, in visiting Naiau the Lakemban nobles freely help themselves to food without asking. In the Southern Islands the Lakemban nobles beg of the natives, or may take by force, which is resented; while in Naiau such actions are condoned, "for it is our soil, our animals; the nobles came to Lakemba and left the Naiau people in charge." If any one is rude inside the Tui Naiau's compound, the Naiau people deal with him. They act as indoor-heralds like Katumbalevu.

The villages of Naiau stand in the following order: Salyia (Nasalia); Narothivo; Liku. The inhabitants of Salia recently lived in Ndevo, but moved to the new village by Maafu. Of old, if a village moved it kept its name, but now it takes the name of the new site. Narothivo was formerly the leading village, and to the present day the chief of Naiau takes his title of Tui Naro from that village, but Nasalia was strong-handed and became chief in the days when Christianity was just beginning. Liku has no position: it is made up of people from the other two villages who went to plant there. The *tauvu* of Naiau is Notho, one of the most noted *tauvu* ships in Lau. (See p. 212.)

## Thithia

Thithia was not a Lakemban dependency of old, but a land that "merely was" (*a vanua ka koto nga*); it is as turned round in consequence of wars. Thithia and Ono are described as *nggali vaka-veitambani* or *nggali veitambani*, the word *tamba* means side, wing; *veitambani* therefore means related as one side to the other; and *nggali veitambani* means that Ono and Thithia are subject to Lakemba inasmuch as each forms one of a pair with Lakemba. The Lakembans, however, can give no explanation of the term, except that

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Lakemba



they are able to fight with Lakemba. An army twice went against Ono. Thithia also was twice attacked. A Thithia man explains:

> If a noble of Tombou went to Thithia, or a noble of Thithia went to Lakemba, he was snubbed. They were like bananas (*mbalembale vakawundi*) because neither was above the other, but both on a level. If Thithia was defeated it is because they ate Roko Nayatha, a nobleman of Lakemba, in the course of the wars; had they not done so they would never have been beaten.

The *tauvu* of Thithia is Kanathea. This is due to Ratumaimbulu. He is worshipped both in Kanathea and in Tarukua. Vatuvara is also *tauvu*, also has gods in common (*tevoro vata*). Mbenga (Mbengga) is also *tauvu*: the nobles of Lakemba began; it spread to Thithia because it is considered to be Lakemban territory.

Besides "going to" Lakemba, Thithia "goes to" other Moala Islands; the village of Tokalau (Natokalau), to Totoya: Mambula and Tarukua, to Moala: Natheva and Lomati, to Matuku and Moala. They go by way of kinship only (as opposed to subjection). Their dialect is more after the Moala type, but spoken in a singsong way.

The chief village of Thithia is Mambula. Its clans are: Ngoneulu or Turangaulu, Soso, Mambula, Nggelenggele, Walakewa, Lauva. Ngoneulu are noble, Soso are their equals, and Tui Thithia is appointed among them also. In Tarukua are two clans of nobles: Vunisea and Nggitawa, from among whom Tui Thithia can also be chosen. Soso goes with Nggitawa; they are brothers. Of old they all lived in Tarukua. The nobles have a common descent but have split up into sections. Mambula are the heralds of Tui Thithia. There are small heralds in the various villages. The other clans are the people of the land (*lewe ni vanua*).

The clans of Tarukua are: Sawana, Yarovi, Tarukualeka. Nggitawa are included in Yarovi: their fathers were there before. The Turangaulu and the Vunisea of Tarukua are in Sawana. The Vunisea of Mambula live with the Turangaulu of that place. An informant says,

> We the natives of Yarovi, are the noblemen's old men (*nggase*), but the Nggitawa lives with us and are installed as Tui Thithia. We are bastards (*i tathini*) to them; the bastards wait upon the noblemen; their fields are not used for feasts; they are for the use of the noblemen (*na kendratou nga*); but the fields of the nobles are used for feasts.

Yarovi is really a side of the oven. It is divided into two sections (*i tokatoka*): Tiro and Nggilo. Some nobles are in Tiro, some in Nggilo; the descendants of the female line in Tiro, of the male line in Nggilo. If the descendants of the male line are extinct, the descendants of the female line or the bastards may be appointed.

Sawana is a clan, not a side of the oven. Its sides of the oven are: Yavuliku, Nasawa, Vanga. There are also sections (*i tokatoka*). Nasawa

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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canoe, the sail was carried round by way of the outrigger with the result that the canoe stopped dead. Hence the rhyme:

| | |
|---|---|
| Tui Ongea wiri kata: | The Chief of Ongea sits on the canoe; |
| Me kau saka i thama a latha. | Let the sail be carried on the outrigger. |

Ongea ceased to be noble when Fulanga beat it in war. Since then its people are the lowest in Lau and very shy. When the Fulanga people go to Ongea and kill the fowls, and the natives go about with folded arms and stooping. The Ongeans call Fulanga, Mbauleka (Little Mbau), because it is to them as Mbau is to Fiji.

In Ono are two uninhabited islands, Tuvana i Tholo and Tuvana i Ra, the first belonging to the clan of Nukuni, the other to Lovoni.

The men of Ono were once red-skinned; now they are shorter and darker. The inhabitants of old were Tongans, judging from their present habits, for every day they prepare food with coconut cream and make an oven on the shore. Their physique is Tongan. [I have seen some very un-Fijian types in Ono, thick set with straight hair and Polynesian features.] They are good at enduring pain.

Ono has a system of levy called *vatongia;* if the chief fixes the rate of a feast at four yams, a man who has one piece of land contributes four, one who has two contributes eight and so on.

As a result of the murder of Niumataiwalu, the founder of the present Lakemban dynasty, war broke out between Matokana, the chief village, and Onolevu. Onolevu won and became chief instead of Matokana, he also became Envoy to Lakemba. A third village is called Ndoi.

Ono was settled peaceably by people from Wathiwathi, and all the clans of Wathiwathi are to be found in Ono. Vatoa was subject to Ono from of old; it is also, to a certain extent, descended from Wathiwathi. Ono used to "go to Wathiwathi" but Naiatha conquered it and "brought" Ono to Tumbou. Ono was formerly a land ignorant of chiefly ways. Now, following the example of their chiefs, they have learned manners and excel. Many Tongans reside in Ono.

Mothe is a noble land (*vanua vakaturanga*); but not originally, like Kambara; it became noble later because the inhabitants are true relatives of the nobles of Lakemba. Formerly the children of the Lord of Naiau intermarried with Mothe. It must have been daughters whose descendants live in Mothe, since the nobles of Lakemba intermarried equally with the other islands. Mothe and Navuanirewa are said to have a common ancestry (*kawavata*).

Oneata lies low and there is a marsh in the middle. At times the island swarms with mosquitos. The reef is called Mbatiyanitu. There are two villages on Oneata: Wainggore (?Wainggori) and Ndakuiloa. Of old there was only one. The clans of Wainggore are: Longaniu, Tavanga, Tumba, Waleti. Of Ndakuiloa they are Wako, Nakuli, Mbutha. Tumba. Mbutha, now extinct, were the heralds.

Oneata is not a noble land. The chief is called Tui Oneata (lord of Oneata) only since Christian times; it is the title of the district headman under the Government. The order of succession has been Mbalemalua of Tumba, Saiasa of Longaniu, Sakaraia of Tumba, Nathanieli of Longaniu. Longaniu takes precedence. The clans intermarry because they are cross-cousins.

The people do not clap hands when the chief of Oneata drinks kava. The present chiefs originated from Nukunuku in Lakemba; they came from overseas: it is so in all countries in Fiji. Two brothers came from Nukunuku; they came because they had a god in common (*tevoro vuta*) with Oneata, called Tui Oneata. They were sister's sons (*vasu*) to Oneata. Manjingi, the younger, became chief; the late Tui Oneata, still living, was his grandson.

The present Lord of Oneata originates from Tonga. He is a descendant of Tui Afitu, who was a chief in Tonga. He went to Lakemba and married there. He had one daughter whom the people of Lakemba sent to Oneata. The descendants of Tui

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929

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## WARFARE

### FORTS

Few Lauans have seen heathen warfare. Lau did little fighting. 721

War is called *i valu*, which also means battle, army, battalion. It is also called the Evil (Tha), and the expression "the land is bad" means it is at war. Civil war is *veisei* (to migrate apart).

The villages of old were very small, surrounded by a moat. The plan could best be seen at the old village of Waitambu, which was known as Korotikindua (One-sided-village). It stood on a rocky eminence, Vatulinglingi, by the sea. It was rather difficult of access, especially on the sea side, at which there was no moat; on the land side the moat was broad and semicircular, from the middle outwards branched off another ditch, which may possibly have communicated with an outer moat. 712

Defences seem to have been repaired only when an attack was expected, when a stockade (*viri mba*) was made, and the water bailed out. Besieging parties set up a rough fence of reeds called a white fence because reeds are white. For "besieging" Lauans use *kamba* (to climb).

### ORACLES

If questioned about the ancient gods, a man will almost invariably describe how they were consulted before a war was undertaken. The following account has been received: 726 757 776

Upon going to war, the ancient Lauans prepared large quantities of fermented food (*mandrai*)—the whole of Lakemba made a feast for the god Tui Lakemba, and each clan made a feast for its respective spirits. The people offered up a bunch of coconuts in the usual style (p. 70). The priest took them and rubbed them up and down and said:

"What are these coconuts?" They said:

"The coconuts of the war against Thithia. They are impudent. Let us have an answer whether they can be overcome or not."

The priest would say, "All right, I will go on ahead; three of the enemy will die in battle," and as he threw down the bunch, three nuts would fall off, or one or two as the case might be. Sometimes he said, "You will not kill (*ravu*); some of you will die."

It was so with all the spirits. In Waitambu they would offer kava to the Wind Women (Matangi, p. 192); they lay down the kava root and clapped, and touching it said, "We have come, sirs, we who are in distress, because, sirs, of the army which is about to come. Be gracious and help us in the war. That is all we have come to you for." Then they clapped again, inclined the head and listened for an answer. The women said, "Go that you may conquer," at which they all clapped. If the women were angry they would speak evil and rate them: "You will be smitten," at which the people also clapped; they might not be angry with the Matangi.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara



New *meke* are taught by the master dancer who is often the composer. Old *meke* are learned by imitation. There is no master dancer on Kambara. The newest forms on Kambara were learned from a man of Vungalei, Tailevu, who visited the island several years ago. Southern Lau is not a center of new dance forms. New forms are sometimes imported into southern Lau from Matuku, Taveuni, Kandavu, and Lakemba.

*Meke* learning provides entertainment for the whole village. Two or three months before an important event, such as the arrival of a chief, *meke* are practiced on the ceremonial ground almost every afternoon and, if the moon is bright, in the evening. The dance is repeated innumerable times until each individual has mastered every detail. The rehearsal is a social event attended by all women and children of the village. Girls and young women dance while older women watch and applaud. In Nggalinggali a rehearsal was interrupted by a middle-aged woman named Koro, who did a parody on the *meke* to the delight of the other women who laughed hilariously at her antics.

Old *meke* found in southern Lau are the war dance (*meke ni vulu*), the sitting dance, and the fan dance, and on Namuka the kava dance (*meke ni yanggona*). These types are definitely Fijian. The old *meke* are composed in the *luve ni wai* idiom (p. 118) and their meaning is not clear to present-day natives.

## WAR DANCES

There are two types of war dances (*meke ni vulu*): the club dance (*meke ni malungu*) and the spear dance (*meke ni wesi*). They are distinguished by vigorous warlike movements and facial expressions. The dancers carry clubs or spears which they flourish menacingly, dancing and chanting at the same time. Around their waists they wear barkcloth and dance skirts made of strips of hibiscus bark dyed black, and around their necks wreaths. Their bodies are oiled and their faces blackened. The dance is accompanied by the *meke* drum.

A war dance recorded on Kambara follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Na wesi | Spear dance |
| Ko ra kala-iya-vongei, | Oh, sir rat, |
| Ka ulia na sivaro | Stir the pudding |
| Ma sa nggai koto ra vuaka. | Sir pig is down. |
| Iri mbula, ra mbula, | Fan of life, sir life, |
| Iri mate, ra mate. | Fan of death, sir death. |
| Iri vakasanggalenggalo | The sinking fan |
| A iri mbula, ra mbula, | Oh, fan of life, sir life, |
| A iri mate, ra mate. | Oh, fan of death, sir death. |

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara



and Tokalau where a man named Velana was killed. In the village of Tokalau four stones, forming a rectangle, mark the spot where a man dropped dead. A pile of stones at Toka, Fulanga, also mark a burial place.

Formerly, members of the deceased's clan would chop off their little fingers with an adz.

## WARFARE

The war complex in Lau was closely allied with the ancestor cult and the concept of rank based on mana. Informants agree that warfare and fortified villages were introduced into Lau by the immigrants who formed the chiefs' phratry. It is said that before the migration from Viti Levu, the land people lived peacefully together in scattered hamlets. A state of tension grew out of the keen interclan and intervillage rivalry for prestige, enhanced by the desire for power on the part of the warriors of the ranking noble clans.

Warfare in Lau usually took the form of raids between villages led by rival war leaders of the chief group. Rivalry often centered around the desire for women. The attacking party would capture a high ranking woman, perhaps the wife of a chief from another village, and the affront would be met by a counter attack.

Tales of warfare are full of treachery. The object was to outwit the opponent and save one's own skin. To risk one's life was considered stupid. Attacks were usually launched only by forces superior in strength to those of the defendants. Otherwise an attempt was made to lure the leaders into ambush and to attack them singly or in groups.

Great care was taken to insure the success of a raid. The attacking party secured the assistance of relatives. If they planned to attack a village on another island, the warriors used a related village on that island as their landing place, base of supplies, and ally. The priest retired to the temple and propitiated the war god (*kalou ni valu*). He made an offering of kava to the god and he prayed to the god until he was possessed. He then took the ceremonial club of the clan and stood it up on the handle in the center of the god house. If the club stood up unsupported he knew that the god had entered the weapons of the warriors and the raid would be successful. If it fell down, the raid would not be successful, and the expedition was abandoned.

Four days before the attack the warriors held a meeting in the village, and the war gong (*lali ni valu*) was sounded. It consisted of a hollow log of *tavola (Terminalia catappa)* or *mbuambua (Guettarda speciosa)* wood about 1.5 meters long. Two men, each with two sticks, stood on opposite sides of the gong and beat in unison. The first drummer was called *tau*, the second *vakataungande*. The complicated, rhythmic war beat was called *nduki tu a lali ni mbakola*. During the four days before the raid the men prepared their weapons. Sexual intercourse and the stealing of property were forbidden